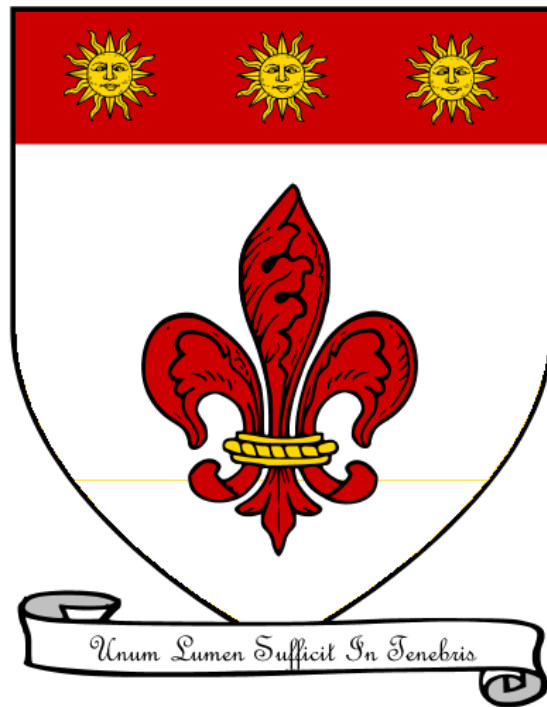


FleurtyHerald

Presents:

Heraldry for Beginners



Meet the Author*

Giata Magdalena Alberti (called Giada) is a late-15th Century Italian who passes her time spending her condottieri husbands money and entertaining the visitors of her father's house by hosting weekly salons. Her ability to read, write and act as a liaison between the artists and their patron (her father) enables her to participate in social situations which most respectably married women of Venice would never be privy.

Her hobbies include purchasing fabrics and jewels, occasional hunting (on the Terra Firma), mediating contests of skill and chance, and traveling to Milan or Ferrara to visit her friends at Court.

<https://labelladonna.net>

Gigi Coulson is a modern American who, in her real life, works on coastal restoration in South Louisiana. Her email is fleurtyherald@gmail.com.

**Much of the information contained within was written by David Serhienko (known in the SCA as Deykin ap Gwion) for the education of all those interested in the Society for Creative Anachronism's Heraldic Arts. Other information gleaned from the internet is cited via url.*

About SCA Heraldry

http://heraldry.sca.org/OandA/heraldry_overview.html

Names and Armory

To enhance the medieval ambiance of SCA events, participants typically adopt pseudonyms and heraldic insignia with a medieval flavor, which they use on a long-term basis. Thus a person whose legal name is "Gary Smith" might choose to be known as "Hrolf Einarsson" to his SCA friends. And at SCA tournaments and wars he might bear a *device* on his shield consisting of six black lions on a gold background.

An SCA *device* is a heraldic insignia which used to indicate that the owner of the device is present. The SCA uses the word *armory* to refer to heraldic insignia in general.

Participants generally select their own SCA name. It is considered bad form to assume a name too reminiscent of another participant or any famous person, be they modern, historical, or fictitious. Also, intrusively modern names should be avoided. Armory, too, must be chosen with care to avoid modern-style designs and designs that make inappropriate claims.

Every chapter of the SCA has an officer, called a *herald* to assist participants in choosing appropriate names and armory.

Registration

To reduce the chances of confusion or offense caused by inappropriate names and armory, the SCA has organized a *registration service*, to which participants may submit their proposed names and armory for approval. In addition, the SCA registers names and armory for SCA chapters (or *branches*), their officers and titled nobility, and the honors they may bestow on participants.

The registration process is administered by the SCA's own "College of Arms".

The SCA Armorial

An *armorial* is a reference book containing coats of arms, arranged alphabetically by their bearer's names. The *SCA Armorial* is an armorial of insignia registered with the College of Arms. It also lists registered names for individuals and groups that have no registered insignia. It is available as a 500-page loose-leaf document or as a 5 MB text-file. [Search forms](http://heraldry.sca.org/OandA/index.html) (<http://heraldry.sca.org/OandA/index.html>) for the SCA Armorial enable access via the World Wide Web.

The SCA Ordinary

An *ordinary* is a reference book containing coats of arms, arranged in descriptive categories. The *SCA Ordinary* is an ordinary of insignia registered with the College of Arms. It is available as a 1000-page loose-leaf document and [as a World Wide Web document \(http://heraldry.sca.org/OandA/index.html\)](http://heraldry.sca.org/OandA/index.html).

Court and Voice Heraldry

SCA events may feature courts, tournaments, and other activities. A *court* is a general audience granted by a high-ranking SCA noble for the purpose of doing official business. The organization of courts is the responsibility of *court heralds*.

SCA heralds also assist the running of events by making public announcements, especially at tournaments. For instance, a herald is typically employed to announce the combatants before each bout of a tournament.

Since amplification is not used at SCA events, vocal training is very helpful for court and tournament work, which is called *voice heraldry*.

Introduction to Book Heraldry

<http://www.sca.org.au/rowany/newcomers/heraldry.html>

Names

When you join the Society, you may choose a name for your *persona* - your self within the SCA. This cannot be the name of a person who really existed or who is famous in literature - you can't call yourself Anne Boleyn or Conan the Barbarian. Instead, you create a name of someone who might have existed - Anne Williams of London or Conal ap Llewellen would be fine. A name should be chosen from a specific time and place, for consistency.

The only other rules are that your name must have been able to exist within the SCA time period, is not offensive, and the grammar and spelling must be correct. Different countries and different times had different naming practices - our "firstname surname" form is only one of several options. The Heralds in your group will let you know if the name you have chosen is workable, or help you to alter it.

Once you register your name, it will appear on all official records, award scrolls, and newsletters. It will be announced in court, on the fighting field, and wherever you spend your time - so choose carefully. Once registered, your name is protected and no-one else can use it officially.

Devices

The designs you see on banners, shields, and favors all belong to people in the Society. Each design is registered to one person and should only be used by them. In our modern world these are often called "crests" or "coats of arms". Since a crest is really the animal or symbol on top of the fighter's helm and a

coat of arms can only be used by someone who has been given an Award of Arms (or Grant or Patent of Arms) by Their Highnesses or Their Majesties, we call these designs **devices**.

Anyone may register a device and then paint it on a shield or work it into a costume. This is also called armory. Once you register your device, it is protected (even if you leave the SCA) and cannot be used officially by anyone else. If you get an Award of Arms, this device becomes your "coat of arms" and you can make a banner and hang it in the feast hall. You can paint your device onto chests and tablecloths, or embroider it onto favors. You can use your device (as a badge) to mark your gear, your children, your fighting unit, and your pavilion.

It is useful to learn the basics of heraldry before trying to design your own device and many people find it a fascinating study for its own sake. The general idea is to come up with a design which is heraldically correct, unique, easily recognized, easy to draw or sew (if possible), and which you like. Once you have submitted your device (get your local Herald to help you), it is checked against all other devices registered in the SCA and some important real ones. It takes about eight to twelve months from when you submit your device to when it is registered. If it doesn't pass, you can modify the design and try again.

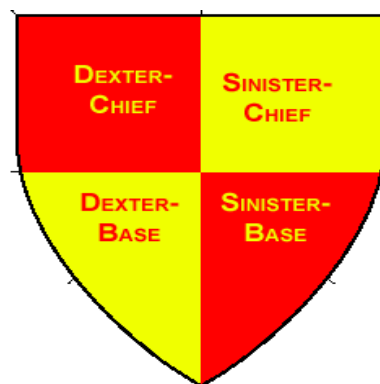
At its most basic, heraldry makes use of 7 tinctures, which are divided into two categories: colors and metals.

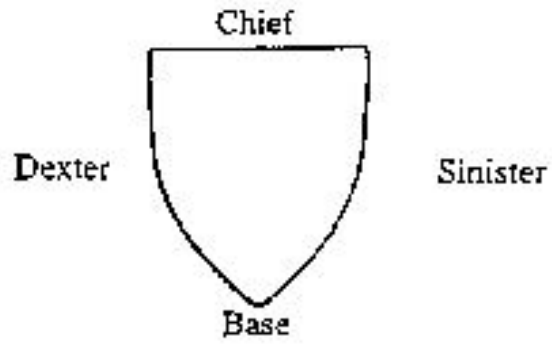
There are two metals, gold (yellow) and silver (white). Heraldry uses the terms 'or' and 'argent', instead. There are also five basic colors used: red, blue, green, black and purple. The heraldic terms for them are 'gules', 'azure', 'vert', 'sable' and 'purpure'.



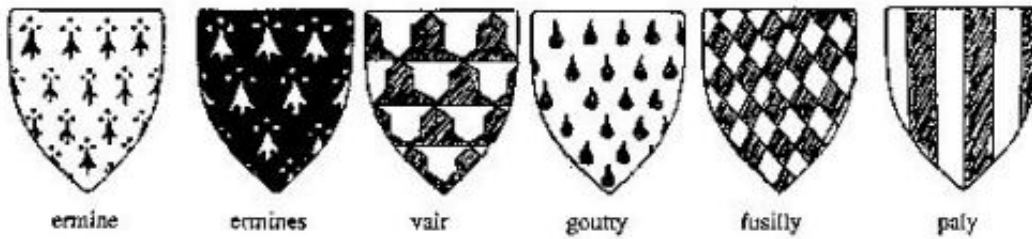
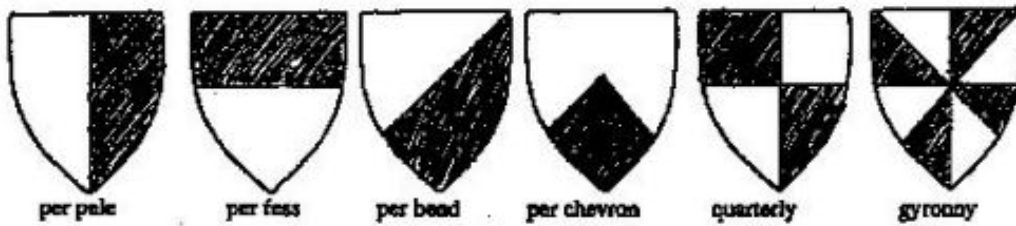
Plainly stated, the Rule of Tincture is "metal must never be placed upon metal, nor color upon color". The reason for this is contrast (think of how it would look across a field, and now think of modern road signs and logos, i.e, Stop, Exxon, Walmart, Yield, etc)

REGIONS





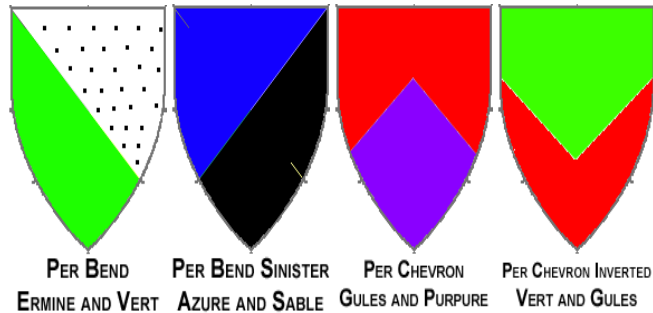
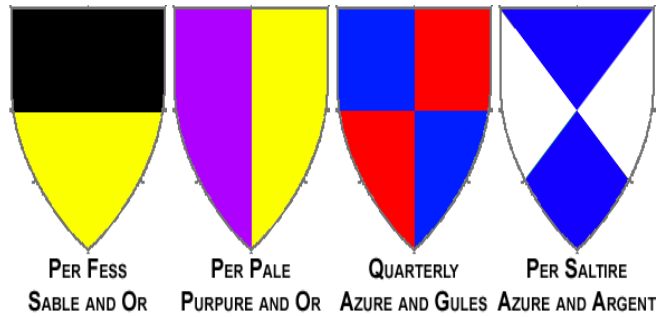
COMMON FIELD DIVISIONS



LINES OF DIVISION

| | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | |
| Dovetailed | Embattled | Engrailed |
| | | |
| Indented | Invected | Nebuly |
| | | |
| Potent | Urdy | Wavy |

EXAMPLES



Per bend wavy

gules and vert, a sun Or and a lotus argent

CHARGES

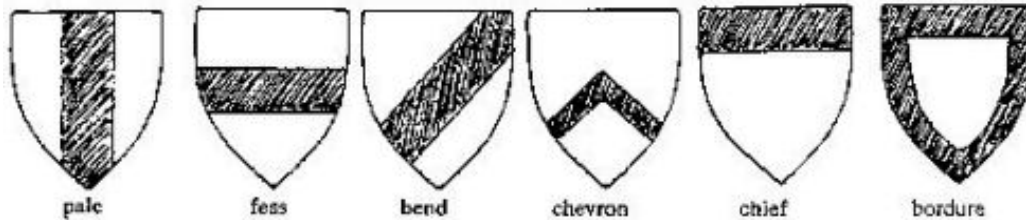
At long last, we come to the part of the device everyone is interested in... charges. A charge may be a simple geometric figure, such as a circle or a square, or a representation of an inanimate or animate item (see the device above).

Those charges which consist simply of geometric shapes have a special name... They are referred to as the ordinaries, and we will discuss them first. We will then continue on to discuss charges which represent items.

ORDINARIES

The SCA defines ordinaries as “those simple geometric figures that pass through the center of the field and terminate at the edge of the field (the pale, fess, bend, bend sinister, chevron, cross, saltire, pall, and

pile), their diminutives, and the simple geometric additions to the edges of the field (such as the chief and bordure).” <http://heralds.westkingdom.org/Templates/Ordinaries/index.htm>



PERIPHERALS

Peripherals are a subclass of ordinaries. Included in the definition of ordinaries was the phrase “and the simple geometric additions to the edges of the field (such as the chief and bordure).” Since they don’t technically pass through the center of the field, as required by the first part of the definition of ordinary, they get their own name, and that name is Peripherals

DESIGNING YOUR DEVICE

When designing your device, remember the purpose of armorial devices. They exist to make you recognizable. Thus, whenever possible, avoid anything which will make it difficult to recognize a device from a distance. Avoid using fiddly little details which will fade into a blur from a distance.

Make sure to render each charge in your device as large as possible without obscuring the other charges present, if any and use strongly contrasting colors whenever possible.

Your goal is for each charge to fill the space available to it as completely as possible while still maintaining identifiability for each individual charge item.

The Rule of Eight

As a rule of thumb, keep a count of the number of charge types you are using and the number of different tinctures you are using. If the total of those two values exceeds eight, you should make changes, because your device is too complicated to remain period in style and recognizable from a distance.

Resumes and Slot Machines

Your device is your graphical name, but it need not be your life story. Due to changes over time and heraldic inheritance, very few devices in period could tell you anything about the bearer beyond their identity, and, perhaps, to whom they were related.